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ABSTRACT

While French is the official language of the Congo, the study of English is compulsory throughout the entire seven years of secondary education. A study evaluated the effectiveness of English education, focusing on the training, qualifications, motivation, and morale of the English teacher; the suitability, appropriateness, and design of existing instructional materials; and the general English curriculum. For the study, major foreign language teaching methods were reviewed and their relative effectiveness assessed. Data were obtained from English teachers, Inspectors of English language, and student teachers of English, by means of questionnaires, observation, and interviews. Responses provided information on attitudes on reasons for training as English teachers; length and content of training; staff quality; objectives of the teaching of English in the Congo; and recommendations for improvement. Questions were raised about the necessity for English instruction and the effectiveness of the current system. Among the recommendations were suggestions that more specific and moderate objectives be set for the teaching of English, and that English instruction should be started later in the secondary school curriculum, with more mature students. Suggestions were also made for improving teacher education. (JD)

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GEORGES MAMPOUYA:

A STUDY OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE TEACHING OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN THE CONGO

1982

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A STUDY OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE TEACHING OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN THE CONGO

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SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF EDUCATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT FOR THE AWARD OF THE POST-GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

1982

This study is dedicated to my wife Marguerite and to my children: Coco, Jeanot, Christian Aimard Le Gros.

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G.M.

Preface

Since 1970 the People's Republic of the Congo has embarked on educational reforms following the failure of the educational system inherited from the colonial era to solve our problems. The current efforts aim at improving the quality of education and at making the whole system more relevant to the development needs and aspirations of our society. This study is a modest contribution to the efforts underway at all levels of the educational system.

G.M.

Definition of terms

M.N.E.: Ministry of National Education

C.E.G.: College d'Enseignement General
Lower Secondary School (4 years)

CET: College d'Enseignement Technique
Lower Technical School (3 years)

Lycee: Higher Secondary school (3 years)

Lycee Technique: Higher technical school (3 years)

Professeur de CEG: Teacher in a lower secondary school

Professeur de lycee: Teacher in a higher secondary school

I.N.S.S.E.D.: Institut Superieur des Sciences de l'Education Faculty of Education

I.N.R.A.P.: Institut National de Recherche et d'Action Pedagogique
National Curriculum Development Centre

Section Anglais: English Panel

ENI: Ecole Normale des Instituteurs - primary Teachers Training College

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CHAPTER I : INTRODUCTION

The introduction of English in the educational system of the Congo dates back to the time when a few secondary schools notably in BZU and P.N. were opened. Long before, most if not all successful primary school leavers either went into training colleges or joined the missionary vocational schools to become carpenters, or again to join the colonial administration. In the two Lycees: Savorgnau de Bz and Victor Augagneur, English was then taught on the same lines as it was in France since the whole secondary curriculum was designed in France.
With the accession of the Congo to independence the teaching of English acquired a new meaning. The country had been admitted to the U.N., joined the OAU and many other international organizations and also

1) established diplomatic links with African, European countries, French or English speaking. Then as one way of opening the country to the outside world where English was thought an important role as an international language and also to strengthen the then much talked of African Unity, the teaching of English was reinforced , with the following educational objectives that by the end of his seven years of secondary school (lower and upper) the pupil should be able to read, write English correctly in order to communicate effectively with any English speaker.

Ever since 1961 Addis Ababa Conference which was attended by most African independent countries and which set 1980 as the target for UPE (Universal Primary Education), the educational system in Africa in general and in the Congo in particular has experienced enormous growth both quantitatively and qualitatively at the primary and secondary levels. The secondary school facilities had to be expanded to cope with the increasing number of primary school leavers, and more teachers had to be trained. More than 2 decades have now gone by since the introduction of English as a compulsory subject for all secondary school pupils and though no systematic evaluation has been carried out to see how

successful the teaching of English has been so far, many educationists, parents and teachers of English are of the opinion that they have fallen short of the set objectives in spite of commandable efforts.

At present, the Ministry of National Education is engaged in pedagogical reforms so as to make the educational system meaningful and relevant, and to that effect the whole school curriculum is being reviewed and improved and other measures taken. But there are components in the improvement of the quality of education if better results are to be obtained: these are training of teachers, and the development of instructional materials. These components are essential in the effectiveness of any subject and in English for that matter. A constant evaluation of the effectiveness of the teaching of English is therefore essential if the learning experiences anticipated is to be achieved. The philosophy guiding reforms in the educational system in the Congo is spelled out by Act of Parliament 20/80, Nov. 80, which stipulates that the Congolese system of education aims to creating a new type of school called: "The School of the People". The creation of this type of school was rendered necessary as the educational system inherited from the colonial period was most unsuitable and irrelevant to the needs and aspirations of the new country which wanted to assert its independence and identity.

The new school curriculum inspired from the "School of the People" philosophy is aware of the fact that 80% of the Congolese population lives in rural areas and is engaged in agricultural activities: fishing, land cultivation and cattle rearing. This new curriculum aims at integrating the school within the community by promoting the cultural and social values of the community. This curriculum endeavours to reconcile manual labour with intellectual labour by involving the pupils in productive activities. This new school will thus serve as

a nucleus for the development of the whole community.

This curriculum departs from the previous one inherited from the past and which tended to turn out products who were alienated from their socio-cultural background and these people actually thought that the only jobs worth having were the white collar jobs.

1.2 The language problem

Like many other African countries which went through the colonial experience, the Congo has adopted the language of the former colonial power, that is French. Even before independence French was the official language of the country. It is used in public administration, offices, business and in the mass media, (that is radio, T.V. and newspapers). Above all, French is the medium of instruction all the way through the educational system, from the Kindergarten to the University. There are so many avenues and resources for learning French that the child learning French in school has no problem in mastering it quickly. On the other hand the problem is very different for the same child in his/Her attempt to learn another language, English for that matter. Its teaching and learning are made difficult because the classroom is the only place where the student can hear and try to speak English. Outside the classroom there is no reinforcement like for French.

The child learning English must learn and attempt to master sounds and structures which are very different from French and of the native tongue. Therefore, it is very difficult, for the pupil embarking on the study of English, to assume that he will arrive at a degree of some mastery. May be as a student reading science or economics, he may need English for a limited purpose only, for instance to read books dealing with science or economics available only in Enlish. Apart from French and English many other languages are spoken throughout the country, but there are two prominent lingua-franca. Kikongo spoken throughout the South, Lingala spoken

the North, incidentally Kikongo and Lingala are the two national languages. The long-term educational policy is to introduce them as media of instruction and thus they will eventually replace French.

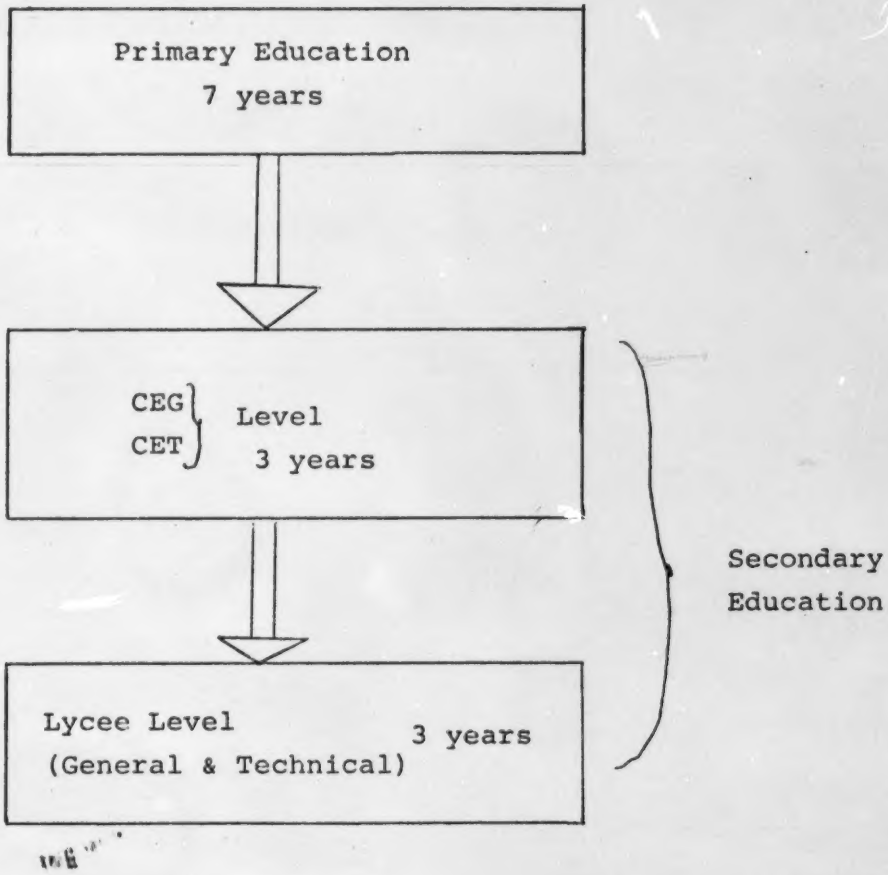
1.3 The Secondary Education System

The secondary education is of seven years duration in the Congo. It comprises the College d'Enseignment General (CEG) or junior secondary and the Lycee or senior secondary. The CEG is four years and the Lycee 3 years. Over the past few years, the whole secondary education has experienced an important growth as more and more primary school leavers were given more opportunities to proceed to the secondary system in an attempt to avoid repeaters and wastage in Standard 7 which consitutes a bottleneck. As a result more and more secondary schools have been built by the local communities throughout the country. The necessity of opening more schools with all its attendant problems has come about as a result of the government's anxiety to achieve Universal Primary Education (UPE).

Since 1964 following the nationalization of the schools, all educational institutions previously run by the Catholic Church and the Protestant Church, came under the direct control of the government. The administrative and teaching staff in all schools is appointed directly by the Ministry of National Education (MNE) through a centralised system. It is also the MNE which pays their salaries, according to their respective qualifications. Thus teachers in the Lycee earn more than their colleagues in the CEG and Primary School. The Ministry of National Education is assisted throughout the country by nine Regional Branches of Education headed by Regional Directors of Education who are directly accountable to the Minister of National Education.

After completing their 4 years in the CEG and passing their O'level certificate called here BEMH they proceed to the Lycee where after 3 years they sit for the Baccalaureat (The General Certificate of Education in the British system). If they are successful they proceed to University. The number of lycees used to be very small in comparison with the number of CEG in the country, and were mostly located in the two most important towns: Brazzaville and Pointe Nore and all CEG graduates would throng to the city. Recently in an effort to check this rural exodus, to strike the balance between the countryside and the town, one lycee has been built in each of the nine regions.

Table I: The Educational system in the People's Republic of the Congo



English is taught throughout the whole secondary education: 7 years.

1.4 The Teachers of English

With so many pupils entering secondary schools and with English as a compulsory subject, there has been a steady demand for English and consequently there has been a pressing need to train more teachers in an effort to meet the demand. Unfortunately, even unqualified teachers have had to be called in to come to relieve the qualified ones. In fact, especially at the CEG level there are many unqualified teachers and their recruitment though momentarily satisfactory has produced predictable results, that is the lowering of the standards of the Teaching of English. Much effort is being made to train them during the vacation periods.

The situation at the lycee level is much better since almost 90% of the teachers of English here went through training and most of them are university graduates.

The institution which trains teachers of English for the CEG and Lycee levels is the Institut Superieur des Sciences de l'education (INSSED) - a component of the UMNG. It takes two years to train CEG teachers and four years to train a Lycee teacher.

The INSEED is well equipped and provides good quality training, but despite efforts made to train more qualified teachers there is still much to do in order to give the many unqualified teachers some training to improve their teaching. A trained and qualified teacher is obviously an important and vital tool in the improvement of the quality of education.

1.5 The instructional materials

The main instructional materials for the teaching of English are textbooks. These textbooks are designed at the Institut National de Recherches et d'Action Pedagogique (INRAP), the National Curriculum Development Centre. These textbooks are disseminated throughout the country but the main problem is that not many of these materials are available in remote areas, which compels the teacher to devote 15 minutes of his valuable time to reproduce the texts on the blackboard. The materials desired for the lycee level are incomplete at the moment, and considerable efforts are being made to include exercises for comprehension and grammar drills. There are also radio programmes intended for the teachers of English and the beginners of the CEG level and the BBC is assisting the centre in providing audio-visual materials. Much remains to be done to improve the quality of the instructional materials but this is vital if the teaching of English is to be effective.

1.6 Purpose of the study

If effective learning outcomes are to be achieved in teaching in general and in the teaching of the English language more specifically: three components must be given careful attention:

1. The teacher of English
   His training and qualifications
   His motivation and morale

2. The instructional materials:
   - the suitability and appropriateness of the existing instructional materials.
   - the design of these instructional materials including teachers' guides

3. The English curriculum

The purpose of the present study is to look critically at these three components and examine how they affect the quality and effectiveness of the teaching of English in the Congo and in the light of the findings to suggest ways which can lead to the attainment of the educational objectives for the teaching of English.

A review of some major foreign-language teaching methods

The first step in the study of this nature will be to review some of the major methods in foreign language teaching.

1. The grammar-translation method

This method cannot be traced back to the tenets of any particular master teacher, but it is clearly rooted in the formal teaching of Latin and Greek which prevailed in Europe for many centuries. When Latin was no longer learned as a language for communication between scholars, its primacy as a matter for study could not be justified on utilitarian grounds, indeed utility was considered at that time an inappropriate criterion to be applied to any area of advanced study. The learning of Latin and Greek was then justified as an intellectual discipline: the mind being trained, hence much memorization of complicated rules and paradigms, and the application of these in translation exercises. The reading and translation of texts was, therefore, of great importance, as were writing exercises in imitation of these texts. Modern languages were accepted as reputable areas of study only after much controversy and opposition from the supporters of classical studies. They had to prove themselves of equal value for the training of the mind and as a key to a great literature and civilization. It was

inevitable then, that modern-language teaching methods should be modelled at this stage on the methods already employed for the teaching of an ancient language no longer in use for communication.

That classical method has persisted in many areas, despite attempts to introduce methods which may be considered more appropriate to the teaching of a living language, with a contemporary literature, to secondary school students, whose range of interest are so wide.

This resistance to change in methods may well have been due to the constant publication for school use of textbooks written by scholars not engaged in teaching at secondary level. Prepared in the quiteness of a study away from the urgent realities of the classroom, many such textbooks are notable for the meticulous detail of their description of the grammar of the language, their preoccupation with written exercises, especially translation exercises and their lengthy bilingual vocabulary lists. They usually contain extracts from great writers, chosen for their intellectual content rather than for the standard of difficulty of the language or their intrinsic interest for the adolescent student.

These textbooks dominate the work of the teacher who follows this method, his most immediate aim becoming the completion of all the exercises in each lesson and the covering of all the lessons in the book in a given period of time. The teacher who himself was taught by this method and who had not had adequate training in modern-language teaching methodology continues this tradition.

The method aims at inculcating an understanding of the grammar of the language, expressed in traditional terms, and at training the student to write the language accurately by regular practice in translating from his native language. It aims at providing the student with a wide literary vocabulary and at training the student to

extract the meaning from foreign texts by translation into the native language and, at advanced stage, to appreciate the literary significance and value of what he has been reading.

The foreign language is not used in class to any extent, except when stereotyped questions may be asked about the subject matter of a reading passage, and the students answer in the foreign language with sentences drawn directly from the text.

The main defects of the method have been pointed out in the process of description. Little stress is laid on accurate pronunciation and intonation, communication skills are neglected, there is a great deal of stress on knowing rules and exceptions, but little training in using the language actively to express one's own meaning, even in writing.

The student's role in the classroom is, for the greater part of the time, a passive one - he absorbs and then reconstitutes what he has absorbed to satisfy his teacher.

2. The direct method

Advocates of active methods continued to make themselves heard in various countries throughout the nineteenth century, and by the end of the century some of them had had considerable influence on foreign language teachers. These theorists shared a common belief that students learn to understand a language by listening to a great deal of it and that they learn to speak it by speaking it, associating speech with appropriate action. This, they observed, was the way children learned their native language, and this is the way children who had been transferred to a foreign environment acquired a second language, apparently without great difficulty. The various methods which developed at this time can be grouped together as forms of

direct method, in that they advocated learning by the direct association of foreign words and phrases with objects and actions, without the use of the native language by teacher or student. Speech preceeded reading, but even in reading students were encouraged to forge this direct bond between the printed word and their understanding of it without passing through an intermediate stage of translation into the native language. The ultimate end was to develop the ability to think in the language, whether conversing, reading or writing.

This new emphasis on the foreign language as the medium of instruction in the lassroom meant that correct pronounciation became an important consideration.

Since the study of phonetics had developed during the second half of the 19th century, teachers were able to make use of its findings on the mechanics of sounds production and of its newly system of notation. Direct-method teachers frequently began a language course with an introductory period during which students were taught the new sound system. Often, for an initial period of several months, the only representation students saw of sounds they were learning to produce and discriminate was a phonetic notation.

At its best, the direct method has provided an exciting and interesting way of learning the foreign language through activity. It has proved to be successful in releasing students from the inhibitions all too often associated with speaking a foreign tongue, particularly at the early stages.

3. The reading method

After the publication in 1929 of the Coleman report as part of the Modern Foreign Language Study in the United States, it became clear that the majority of American students studied for a period of two years only. The report maintained that the only objective which could be considered attainable in such a short period was the development of reading ability. Because the teachers in other countries were re-examining their objectives in foreign language teaching, this report had considerable influence. As a result of the Coleman recommendations teachers began to seek the most effective ways of developing reading skill so that the graduate of a language course of limited duration would be capable of independent reading after his formal study of the language has ended.

It was felt that facility in reading could not be developed unless the students were trained in correct pronounciation, comprehension of uncomplicated spoken language and the use of simple speech patterns. The reading method for the most part produced students who were unable to comprehend and speak the language beyond the very simplest exchanges.

4. The notational syllabus theory

It can be described as the backbone of a language course based on language functions or speech acts rather than on units of grammar or situations with a grammar focus. It would include lessons entitled: "Expressing Approval", "Disagreeing", "Expressing Happiness". "Predicting".

The general assumptions of a notational syllabus are summarily described by J.L.M. Trim in his preface to the "Threshold level", Trim writes

- "By far the largest group of language learners everywhere consists of people who want to prepare themselves, in a general way, to be able to communicate socially on straight forward everyday matters with people from other countries who come their way, and to be able to get around and lead a reasonably normal social life when they visit another country.....It is this type of learner that the organizers of mass adult education necessarily look and the organizers felt that it could perform a useful function in providing, on the basis of its principles for the operational analysis of objectives, a detailed specification of what, in its opinion, the learner of a foreign language ought to be able to to do with it - what feelings and notions he would need to express or ask, or agree about.....".

Although Trim places particular importance on training persons to effectively communicate their evaluations, intentions, attitudes and emotions in their adopted tongue, proficient language teachers have been doing this implicitly for years, under the direct method, the audio-lingual approach, the situational reinforcement.

6. The audio-lingual method

Until as recently as a decade ago, it appeared that a major breakthrough had occurred in teaching foreign languages. In vogue was a method variously described as the aurol-orol, the audio-lingual or even the linguistic method, that derived much of its novelty from the discipline of linguistics. It appeared to many linguists that language was speech, that speech preceded writing in various ways, that the constrastive systems of phonology and grammar could be described with considerable accuracy and that knowledge of a language as a system for conveying meanings was some how more important than knowledge of the meanings themselves. This linguistic knowledge seemed to provide a new era in language teaching.

This method aims at teaching the language skills in order of

listening, speaking, reading and writing, the emphasis in the early years is on the language as it is spoken in everyday situations, moving at advanced levels to the more literary forms of expression as the last two skills receive increasing emphasis. At no stage, however, are the listening and speaking skills neglected. These are kept at a high level by continual practice.

At the first level of instruction, sometimes longer, learning is based on dialogues containing commonly used everyday expressions and basic structures of high frequency. The vocabulary content is kept to a minimum so that the student may concentrate on establishing a solid control of structure. The dialogues are learned by a process of mimicry-memorization. Students learn the dialogue sentences by heart one by one. First, they listen carefully to the teacher, or a native model on tape, until they can distinguish the sounds and intonation of the phrase to be learned. They repeat then the phrase after the model until they can repeat it accurately and fluently. When each student can repeat it acceptably on his own, further phases are learned.

CHAPTER II

METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH PROCEDURE

1. The target population

The target population was made up of the following groups:
- the teachers of English langauge
- the Inspectors of English language
- the INSSED student teachers of English.

The appropriate group that is the secondary school students from which the sample should have been taken had gone on vacation at the time of the research: The INSSED students were however still in session at the time of the questionnaire administration. Since the first year students at INSSED had just graduated from the lycee, it was considered fair to use them as sample since their level of English is quite good.

2. Sample and sampling procedure

Table II
sampling population

Population	Total Numbers	Sample	Percentage of Sample
INSSED students	100	50	50%
English inspectors	5	5	100%
Teachers of English	200	50	25%
TOTAL	305	105	54.3%

The INSSED students group is made up of former teachers of English without any qualifications and mostly of lycee graduates. Their training lasts 2 years and upon graduation they are posted throughout the country, these are "professeurs of CEG". The other group of teachers serve in different lycees of the country and are called "professeurs de lycee".

The inspectors of English reside in Brazzavile where the central Inspectorate is located, they are five and tour the country throughout the school year. These inspectors did not go through any formal training but were recruited among senior teachers of lycee.

3. Instruments

The instruments for data collection were:
- Observational techniques. These have constituted the basic method of direct study of pupils, teachers and classroom activities.

- Questionnaires to English language teachers and INSSED students
- Interview with the English language inspectors.

1. Type of information wanted:
The questionnaire administered to the teachers of English at both levels, sought information and opinion on the following:
- training: preservice and inservice
- problems encountered
- the objectives of English teaching
- the suitability and limitation of instructional materials
- the present English curriculum
- English time allocation
- size of classes

The questionnaire administered to the INSSED students sought information and opinion on the present organization of teacher training and the content of the training. Questions discussed under this section included:

- length of the training programme
- time allocation
- French subjects
- competence of tutors
- appropriateness and suitability of certain subjects
- others

The structured interview with the inspectors sought information and opinion on the following:

- general performance of teachers
- their problems and handicaps
- suggestions for improving the quality of English language teaching
- the role of inspectors
- the instructional materials

The questionnaire type techniques used were mostly of free response questions, essay type and suggestions.

Because of shortage of time, the problem of transportation and the many problems involved in contacting secondary school teachers throughout the country due to poor roads, and infrastructure, the researcher intentially limited the sample of English language teachers to those in Brazzaville, because they were easily accessible and their cooperation could readily be enlisted.

Five lycees exist in Brazzaville with 50 teachers. The selection of respondents was done on the basis of ten respondents per lycee. The researcher took 10 only per lycee since there are rarely more than 10 in each lycee.

As far as the Inspectors of English are concerned, they are such a small number that it was decided to use the interview technique in obtaining information from the,

Concerning the INSSED students, 50 respondents were selected randomnly from the 2 groups of teachers of CEG and lycee, 25 in the first year and 25 in the second year.

4. Administration of instruments

Due to shortage of time available to carry out a systematic administration and also because of the small number of respondents involved and Brazzaville being one composite city which can be covered easily, the researcher went himself personally around to meet the samples. The questionnaires were collected back the same day, because it has been noticed from experience that when respondents are allowed to take the questionnaire with them, there are very few returns. The method adopted by the researcher ensured a higher rate of returns.

With the inspectors of English, they were given an advance notice of the day for the interview. It was a pannel kind of interview, made of open-ended questions for that purpose a cassette-recorder was used to record the entire conversation which later on the researcher analyzed and extracted any relevant information.

Table III: Questionnaire responses

Sample	Number distributed	Returns received	Percentage responses
- INSSED	50	47	91%
- English Teachers and Tutors	50	30	60%
- Inspectors	5	5	100%
TOTAL	105	77	

Since all the responses showed more than 60%, it was good response on which to base valid conclusions.

Table IV: Data Collection Plan

Date 1982	ACTIVITY
10 April-15 July	Data Collection from INSSED students Teachers of English Inspectors of English
July	Completion of Data Collection Data analysis
August	Write up of the Research study Report

Chapter III

Data Analysis

The questionnaires were all open-ended essay type though requiring short answers, consequently a different model of frequency count was adopted: for each item the different elements of the response were listed separately and for subsequent responses on the other items the elements similar to those already listed were counted on the frequency distribution or tally table. Through this system, the frequency distribution for all the item responses for all the 2 questionnaires was established, the frequency distribution was then followed by analysis of the information so computed.

2. Issues covered in the questionnaires

The table below shows the distribution of questionnaire items among the different criteria of information required through the questionnaires.

Table V

Questionnaire Responses Computation

Issues covered	Questionnaire items on each issue		
	Students	Teachers	Inspectors
1. Reason for training	item 1	-	-
2. Length of the training	item 2	-	-
3. Content of the training	3 4 6 8	4,6,7,11	-
4. Staff quality	4	2, 3	2,8,10
5. Objectives of English	7	10	-
6. Recommendations and opinions	9,10	12,13,14	1,3,4,6,11
7. Teaching Exp. and problems	-	1	-
8. Stay in English speaking count.	-	5	5
9. Communication between Insp. and School	-	8, 9	-
	-	-	7, 9

After computing the questionnaire responses, the researcher proceeded to analyse the data available. The procedure used here was to analyse the returns on the same issue from the three sets of questionnaire together. By adopting this system, it was easier to compare the responses and answers at conclusion.

2.1 Attitude expressed by respondents on the reasons for training as teachers. This item was only covered in the INSSED students' questionnaire.

The response revealed that 30% came to the training because they had just graduated from secondary school, 20% were there for promotion, these were former secondary school teachers without qualification, so after graduation they would earn more money. In fact the reasons given by the 2 groups of respondents are similar or at least interrelated because the higher you go in your studies, the more money you usually get. One thing quite good in our educational system is that upward mobility is easy, many present university professors used to be former primary school teachers. At a time when the status of the teaching profession is being eroded by the meagre wages and the difficult working conditions especially at the primary level, many primary school teachers are eager for promotion, so as to teach in a secondary school where classes are comparatively less crowded and being a CEG teacher you earn a little more money.

2.2. Attitude expressed by respondents on the length of the training. Here again that item was only covered by the questionnaire to INSSED students in item 2.

Out of the 47 respondents, 39 i.e. 83% expressed the view that the length of their training was acceptable, the remaining 8 did not have any idea at all.

Actually the length of the training is two years for the CEG teachers and 3 years for the lycee teachers. Upon graduation all of them are posted in different schools throughout the country. The researcher had intentionally put this question to respondents expecting them to mention that another year should be added to their training, the one year stay in an English speaking country during which year they would come to grips with the practice of speaking English through practical experience to and interaction with English speaking people. But that question will be dealt with later on in this study.

2.3 Attitude expressed by respondents on the content of the training. This item was both covered in the INSSED and English language teachers' questionnaires in items 3, 4, 6, 8 in the Inssed students questionnaire and in items 4,6,7, and 11, in the teachers questionnaire.

Out of the 47 INSSED respondents the following responses were recorded: 36% were happy with the present content, 44% expressed the view that though they were happy with it, it needed some upgrading and trimming, the remaining 14% did not have any opinion on the matter.

The present content of training comprises: theoretical pedagogical courses, general subjects and practical sessions when the students are led on to the field, the classroom, to see in practice what they have learned in theory (for the students in the final year only).

The unhappy students object that all courses intended for future teachers of English should be done in English and some of the subjects in the syllabus are useless: notably French, and biology.

In fact, teaching practical sessions should be introduced as early as the first year, thus enabling the students to acquire early good reflexes, in some cases as has been noticed from experience there is not much communication between the INSSED and the different secondary schools where the students are supposed to carry out their practical session which results in a total misunderstanding and a waste of time. Communication should be started very early when schools reopened and schedules jointly set up, the students would know who their tutors are in which school they will be working.

2.4 Opinion expressed by respondents on staff quality. By staff we mean teachers of English Language at all levels. This item was covered in the students and teachers questionnaires and also in the interview with the inspectors of English language. The item was covered in 4 CF students questionnaire in items 2, 3 in the teachers' questionnaire and in items 2, 8, 10 in the interview with the inspectors.

Concerning the students, they all expressed reservation on the subject of the quality of their tutors and teachers though the questionnaire was anonymous and also though they were reassured that the matter would strictly be treated in confidence. The researcher in private talk with some of the students heard them complain that some of their tutors and teachers were not up to the level and many gave the impression that though they knew their subject, they did not take their job at heart and were visibly unhappy.

Concerning the staff quality of teachers of English, the questions 2 and 3 sought information on their professional background. For example out of the 50 respondents 55% had gone through professional training and the remaining 45% had never been trained.

The quality of education largely depends on the quality of the teaching force. There used to be a time when teachers of English were quite satisfied with the students' performance in English, then came the serious shortage of English teachers, as a temporarily remedy to the situation unqualified teachers had to be recruited. A solution was found but the long term consequences had also started, all teachers of English openly admit now that something has gone wrong, and the entire responsibility lies with the untrained teachers. Some efforts have recently been made to train them through workshops and seminars organized during the long holidays, but their numbers are so great. Given the large number of untrained English teachers and the limited training facilities it will involve long-term planning to train all. But it is hoped that if those seminars are regularly organized within five years all teachers of English will have been trained.

From the interview with the inspectors it is clear that none of them has gone through any systematic training course. For people whose profession is to evaluate and inspect teachers of English many of whom are untrained and sometimes unqualified, they do not command much respect and credibility. Indications are that this year the INSSED, the faculty of Education is opening a training programme for inspectors of English who will then be more qualified to do the job better.

The fact that so many teachers and inspectors are not qualified, has a direct bearing and influence on the effectiveness of teaching and learning of the English language. If the teaching of English is to be effective, careful consideration must be given to the staff quality.

2.5 Attitude expressed by the respondents on the objectives of the teaching of English in the Congo. This item was covered by item 7 in the students' questionnaire and item 10 in the teachers questionnaire.

Out of 50 teacher respondents none was aware of the objectives for teaching English in the Congo. The 5 inspectors sampled confessed that there was up to now no written document specifying these objectives though they argued that it was automatically understood by all teachers that the main objective was cultural development.

This is a vital issue indeed. In recent years, there has been a strong movement in education whose main tenet is that curriculum must be planned by objectives, in other words the subjects included in the curriculum must have terminal behaviours which can be observed and measured. The argument put forward by the proponents is so convincing that one wonders why none has stumbled across this before. In fact it is only when you set objectives for yourselves, that you can determine whether your teaching has failed or not, whether it has been effective or not. In the area of language teaching this aspect is all the more important, as we tacitly expect our pupils to exhibit at the end of the language course, the ability to write and speak English fluently and comfortably.

In their book "Educational Psychology" Gage and Berliver have come up with very interesting remarks and suggestions. "What do you want your students to learn? How should they behave differently after your course, subject, unit or term. your whole encounter with them? Have you ever wished your teacher had told you more clearly what you should have been learning and why?

Persons doing a variety of educational jobs have testified that statements of objectives are essential or at least helpful. In his influential book: Constructing Achievement Tests, R.W. Tyler (1934) asserted that the formulation of objectives is the necessary first step in developing tests. Gagne (1964) noted that "in military training the specification of objectives was particularly necessary because of the close correspondence between training and actual job performance. Thus the clearer the objective, the better trained were the technicians who received the training.

Obviously the lack of clear objectives in the teaching of the English language in the Congo seriously accounts for the poor performance put up so far by both the students and teachers. In this specific case, setting objectives by stages would be a very good solution, the 2 stages would be the CEG and the lycee. With objectives you can evaluate quite easily and determine where you have failed and why.

"Unless they formulate their objectives teachers tend to be concerned merely with the content of instruction and to ignore what the student should learn to do with that content. If the "what to do" is ignored, students tend to assume that they need to memorize content.

History teachers, for instance may want students to understand how past events influenced later events, to be able to draw on historical sources in explaining present day events. Suppose then, that the students read about a certain historical period and the teacher gives tests over the readings. Unless otherwise informed, students may assume that they should merely memorize what they have read about the given historical period. They will not realize that they should look at contemporary problems in the light of historical perspective.

"When objectives are identified and defined only casually, if at all, the students are likely to get the wrong image of what the teacher is trying to teach and what the student is expected to be able to do. He is misguided rather than helpfully steered in his learning efforts (R.W. Tyler, p.78.)".

2.6 Opinions expressed by respondents on the recommendations to improve the quality of the teaching of English in the Congo.

This question refered to items 9,10, in the questionnaire to students, in items 12,13,14 in the questionnaire to teachers of English and items 1,3,4,6,11 in the interview with the inspectors.

This was an open-ended question, it was very interesting to note that each respondent (the student, the teacher, inspector) came up with an original suggestion. Here are some of the ideas put forward by the respondents:

- the provision of language laboratories
- make English a compulsory subject for all secondary school leavers when they enter university
- put pressure on all pupils to buy English textbooks
- arrange organized trips for pupils and teachers to English speaking countries, Cameroon for instance
- use audio-lingual methods
- inservice teachers of English language as often as possible so as to put them in contact with the latest development in the area of language teaching
- give English the same importance like other subjects in the curriculum
- the English syllabus should cater for the learners' needs and interests
- make the teaching of English more related to our students' daily life, to their environment
- make English a compulsory subject at the lycee level for those who have proved satisfactory after the CEG level.

Among the many suggestions put forward by all the respondents, a few points have retained the researcher's attention. It is true that students no longer buy their textbooks. They simply expect the teachers to copy the text on the blackboard which results in a considerable waste of time and inefficiency. Some respondents agreed that many teachers continued to teach the language the way they were taught when they were at school themselves. Teaching in general has evolved, and newaspects are being taken into consideration. More and more educationalists are now talking of the audio-visual lingual method. What is it about? Basically the audio lingual method aims at developing listening and speaking first, as the foundation on which to build the skills of reading and writing. The origin of this method may be found in the work of the American structural linguists and cultural anthropologists who were working in the same climate of opinion as the behaviourist psychologists. In the twenties and thirties, the call was sounding for a strictly scientific and objective investigation of human behaviour. In linguistics this took the form of a descriptive approach to the study of language. This descriptive approach led to research into what people do really say in their mother tongue, in contradistinction to what some traditional grammarians maintain they ought to say.
"Teach the language and not about the language" said one protagonist of the audio lingual method, William Monlton. This slogan clearly reflects the revolt of the audio-lingual teachers against the grammar translation method. In the process of studying the structure of the language, there is much classroom activity of grammar rules and the exceptions to these rules, followed by the written exercises to see if the student has grasped the details, but little practice in the active oral use of the language by the student.

For the audio-lingual teacher, grammar is a means to an end. That which is most useful is stressed and is practiced thoroughly.

"A language is what native speakers say and not what someone thinks they ought to say" is another slogan by the audio lingual supporters. Actually the expressions students learn from audio-lingual materials are those that they would hear around them in the country where the language is spoken. In too many texts, the language used is artificially constructed to teach certain points of grammar or is drawn from literary texts accepted as classics. Such language has proved to be of little practical use in the day-to-day experience of living with people of the foreign country, although it has provided a suitable selection of structures and vocabulary for the reading of their literature.

Chapter IV CONCLUSION AND FINDINGS

The English language has been taught in the Congo for more than two decades now and so far no evaluation has been carried out as to whether the teaching of English has achieved any fruitful results. In the light of our study what clearly comes out is that the teaching of the English language in our country is ineffective. After 7 years of English secondary education, no student feels confident at all to speak the language or at least communicate effectively. No where in the Congo will you hear English spoken except in the embassies of English speaking countries accredited to Brazzaville. In fact the returns do not justify the input. The reasons for the ineffectiveness of the teaching of the English language are many, and some of them have been singled out notably: the bad training of teachers, poor instructional materials, the lack of clear and definite objectives, overcrowdedness of classes and the lack of pressure to learn the language. The Congo is a developing country which badly needs financial resources for its development (housing, road infrstructure). Now education is taking up to 30% of the national budget. The teaching of English alone requires much of this money in terms of training and paying teachers' salaries, designing instructional materials and facilities. Since the teaching of English has proved so ineffective, the question that we are entitled to ask ourselves is the following. Why don't we cancel the teaching of English from the curriculum altogether? Thus the country would save money which could be used to finance other development projects: apparently no consequence would ensue, and more practical subjects could be included in the curriculum. Let English be taught only as a bridge to other fields of knowledge. We may ask whether a foreign language like English can be justified on the grounds of utility. Will the teaching of English in the secondary system prove useful to the student after he has left school?

In a society like ours there is no immediate utility of the language. However, it is undeniable that knowledge of one or another of the acknowledged languages of international communication can be of use in many careers in trade, commerce, international and national agencies, diplomacy, journalism, certain areas of science and engineering, librarianship and of course teaching. Moving beyond the personal level, however, it is important in the modern world that there should in most countries a large body of people able to communicate with persons of other nations in their own language.

Actually there are very few subjects taught at high school level which can be irrefutably justified on the grounds of their ultimate usefulness to individual students. We must ask ourselves whether the study of the English language has anything to contribute to the total educational experience of the adolescent which such study alone can provide or which such study can provide more effectively than any other subject in the curriculum. Apart from the ability to communicate directly with people of other countries, the experience of learning a language by a conscious process and endeavouring to communicate in it gives students a deeper understanding of the nature and role of language, and the problems of communication. Other advantages which come from knowledge of a language provides ready access to its heritage of literature and philosophy, it introduces the student to an activity which can prove enjoyable and profitable to him in his leisure time. It increases his interest in and enjoyment of travel, it enables him to correspond freely with persons in other countries for business or pleasure, it opens up to him sources of information for his occupational or leisure time interests.

If the presence of English can still be justified in the curriculum for the arguments put forward above, another important factor for the quality of good teaching remains the training of the trainer. To that purpose we recommend:

1- that special attention be given to the training of teachers especially to the content of the training. Only proficient students in English should be retain ed to go through the course. According to an old saying, the good teacher is born, not made. This refers to certain qualities of character and personality that enable some to gain the confidence and respect of students more quickly than others, to recognize the students' real problems and to approach these with clarity and patience. Most teachers acquire these abilities through practical experience. There are however, many other requirements for the foreign-language teacher in this modern age. Many need to improve their own foreign language skills, others need opportunities to keep their aurol-oral skills at a high level. As priorities of objectives change, so do techniques. New technological discoveries bring new aids into the clasroom, the teacher must learn to use these effectively. There may be new discoveries in linguistics or psychology which are relevant to his work. He must keep abreast of developments and achievements in the country where the language he is teaching is spoken, in some cases, he must study important changes in the language itself. Within his own classroom he should be alert to evaluate techniques on which he has come to rely and be ready to change and adapt them from year to year to increase their effectiveness. The teacher of a foreign language such as English should join professional associations,

read and contribute to their journals. He should take advantage of the service put at his disposal for professional improvement: seminars, workshops, etc. The teacher who remains alert professionally, evaluating carefully in the light of his experience what he has heard and read, remains vital and interesting in the classroom, even after years of teaching the same subject. He should set before him this dual aim:

- to keep abreast of the developments in his profession
- to keep growing professionally through systematic evaluation of his own experience.

2. Concerning the programme of a training course, this should be flexibly planned and developed to cater for differences in academic level and previous experience among students. These basic characteristics should be as follows:

- 1. The programme should be the result of systematic analysis and planning. The purpose of the prgramme is to generate effective teachers who know how to promote learning among pupils. Having decided upon this objective, the next step is to determine how to achieve it.

- 2. the objective of a teacher training programme should be clearly defined in terms of the skills needed by the teachers. In addition the behaviour which is considered evidence of teaching competency should be spelled out so that it can be easily assessed.

- 3. The programme should be adapted to individual needs of each trainee in terms of his previous level of achievement, his rate of learning and his particular subject preferences.

- 4. The programme should not be intended to produce stereotyped teachers. Instead, a prospective teacher must be expected to bring together various components that make up professional competence and from these develop a style best suited to himself.

- 5. Before being allowed to teach in a real classroom the trainee must show under both laboratory and supervised conditions his ability to bring desired learning outcomes by pupils.

The programme for teacher-training should be organized into 3 phases: a foundation phase, a laboratory phase and a practicum phase.

3. The quality of teachers' training is a crucial point indeed. The effectiveness of the teacher can be measured and evaluated. Usually measurement and evaluation in education are considered only in relation to the student in the teaching learning process. Traditionally, the teacher sits in judgement of students with the attitude that the students' progress or lack of progress is completely the latter's responsibility. Teaching is an extremely complex process with numerous variables affecting teaching and learning. It is usually very difficult to evaluate how effective a teacher is. Teacher effectiveness has been described as the extent to which teachers aid students to attain the objectives of the curriculum. Several factors which hamper the effectiveness of teaching are:

1- ability level of the class
2- previous attainment of the class
3- previously learned work habits of the class
4- cultural advantages outside of school
5- available teaching facilities and learning resources.

The teaching learning process does not occur in a vacuum. Students growth and development result from all the experience encountered by the student. Thus it is difficult to distinguish the effects of the teacher from other agencies and institutions in the student's environment. Frequently, the outcomes of education latent in nature, present immediate association of a cause and effect relationship attributable to a particular teacher. There is a

weakness which in the past may have been overlooked by most educational researchers, that is, any teaching evaluation based on written tests or examinations may be based on what the teacher emphasizes yearly or what the teacher teaches himself and examines.

Many writers and foreign language teachers have argued that the teaching of any foreign language such as English should only be reserved for students with scholastic abilities, that is students who have proved that they are interested, motivated and good.

If the programme of education for the individual child is designed from a utilitarian print of view, then the study of a foreign language such as English will be limited to those who are most likely to reach the stage of mastery where it can become an efficient tool in business, in diplomatic relations or as a key to sources of information.

But since the educational curriculum in our country has its basic aim of providing each student with the opportunity to develop every aspect of his personality and talents to the fullest, each student is given some experience of learning a foreign language which is English and insight into the achievements and problems of other social groups than those of his own society.

The researcher's view and recommendation on this point is that instead of discriminating between the bad from the good students for an ultimate selection, I think that instead of starting the teaching of English in the first year of the secondary education, English should be introduced at a later stage that is in 4^{e}, i.e. two years later. At this stage students are aged between 15 and 16 and are more mature. English would then be carried from 4^{e} to Terminale (last year of secondary education).

The double advantage here would be that all students will be catered for and there would be a syllabus less heavy but with specific and moderate objectives, easily attainable which would also result in the economy of the teaching staff.

4. Another recommendation would be that specific and moderate objectives be set for the teaching of English in this country. Of course there are always implicit objectives underlying the study of any foreign language:
- 1 The acquisition of a set of skills which can become real mastery for professional use when practiced long enough (the increasing ability to understand a foreign language when spoken, the increasing ability to speak a foreign language in direct communication with people of another culture for business or pleasure, and also the ability to speak a foreign language with progressively greater ease and enjoyment.

- 2 A gradually expanding and deepening knowledge of a foreign country - its geography, history, literature, social organization and culture and as a consequence a better understanding of other peoples.

Apart from these general assumptions it is high time that the Ministry of National Education comes out with clear and specific objectives which should be expressed in behavioral. Since our secondary education is divided into two stages of four and three years, these objectives could be expressed this way: for instance by the end of the first stage the CEG level the student should be able to say in English his name, explain the geographical position of the Congo or any other English speaking country or by the end of the second stage, the lycee level, the student should be able to do this and say that in English in order to communicate effectively. If the objectives of the English language are set that way, appropriate methodology would be designed, and at the same time

would be studied the possibility of merging the training of CEG and Lycee levels, by recruiting trainee teachers from the same background.

The last issue we shall examine in our conclusion is that of instructional materials which incidentally in our country is the sole responsibility of our National Curriculum Development Centre (INRAP). INRAP is still a young research centre with its inherent problems notably those of equipment and the lack of systematic training of the curriculum developpers who mostly used to be former teachers. Efforts are now being made by the Ministry of National Education to remedy those problems and with the current ACO programme in Nairobi much is being achieved in the training of the curriculum staff despite the language barrier. So due to poor road infrastructure the dissemination of these instructional materials is ineffective because in many cases they reach their destination long after the school year has started and in many cases teachers waste much precious time copying texts on the blackboard for the students. In the future in designing instructional materials for the teaching of English careful attention will have to be paid to the format and attractiveness of these materials and also to the immediate needs and interests of the learners for whom those materials are designed. The contents of these materials will have to be given special consideration so that while the students are being made aware and familiar with the realities of the English speaking world he is not cut off from his immediate environment with which he is daily in contact - this approach would enliven further their interest and motivation.

THE COMPLEXITIES OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING

There are no simple answers to language learning. Many theories have been put forward over the last decades, innovations and researches introduced, despite of all these, persistent dissatisfaction is still among learners. We need intense empirical study of language acquisition is order to do justice to the complexities of the language problem. We need to determine what aspects of language are to be taught, their relative importance, when and how they can be taught most efficiently and effectively and how to adequately test them. Attention needs to be focussed on the learner with an eye to adapting teaching to his specific needs. Language learners differ in their objectives and specialised needs, therefore, the range, objectives and techniques of language teaching will vary in accordance with specific requirements. One of the most surprising things about language is that the native language is acquired by all humans almost without fail, whereas a foreign language is rarely learned efficiently in a formal school situation.

Besides educational, linguistic and psycho-linguistic research, there is an equal need for socio linguistic and socio-cultural research. Research and practice in teaching and learning native and foreign languages should closely be linked. Joshua Fishman notes (1968) "Native as well as foreign language teaching should benefit from the concept of a speech community with a repertoire of varieties". The extreme complexity of language learning makes teaching an undertaking of interlocking activities involving the school at all levels, the education of teachers, the producers of materials, curriculum developers, educational planners and the community. Lack of stress on linguistic and cultural aspects of contemporary language at the university levels can affect the quality of language at all levels. Language can be taught and learned in school settings. These include direct field experience, simulated environments, provisions for varied activities and the teaching of subjects

in the foreign language. Much can be learned from a systematic evaluation of bilingual schools. Actually the place of a given langauge in an educational system depends upon the importance attributed to that language by the particular society.

MINISTERE DE L'EDUCATION NATIONALE

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Travail - Democratic-Paix

SERVICE DE LA REFORME PEDAGOGIQUE

DIVISION DE LANGUES VIVANTES

SECTION ANGLAIS

QUESTIONNAIRE ANONYME AUX ETUDIANTS DE L'INSSED

1. Pourquoi avez-vous choisi de venir a -'INSSED?
2. Que pensez-vous de la duree de votre formation?
3. Que pensez-vous des periodes de stages pratiques?
4. Tous vos cours sont-ils faits en Anglais?
5. Que pensez-vous de vos encadreurs et professeurs?
6. Yaurait-il des disciplines dans le programme que vous trouvez encombrantes au memes inutiles? Lesquelles?
7. Au cours de vos periodes pratiques vous avez pris connaissance des programmes d'Anglais au CEG ou Lycee, qu'en pensez-vous?
8. Pensez-vous qu'il y ait des choses qui manquent dans votre programme de formation, lesquelles?
9. Quelles solutions preconiseriez-vous pour rendre efficace l'enseignement de l'Anglais au Congo?
10. Auriez-vous d'autres remarques a faire?

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SECTION ANGLAIS

REPUBLIQUE POPULAIRE DU CONGO

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QUESTIONNAIRE ANONYME AUX PROFESSEURS D'ANGLAIS

1. Depuis combien de temps enseignez-vous l'Anglais?
2. Etes-vous sorti d'une ecole de formation? Si oui, laquelle?
3. Avez-vous deja pris part aux seminaires et stages de recyclage organises a l'intention des professeurs d'Anglais?
4. Si, oui, comment les avez-vous trouves?
5. Qelles difficultes particulieres recontrez-vous en tant qu'enseignant d'une langue etrangere telle que l'Anglais?
6. De quel materiel didactique faites-vous le plus souvent usage lors de vos cours?
7. Etes-vous satisfait de ce material? Si non, que réprechez-vous a ce materiel?
8. Avez-vous jamais se journe dans un pays Anglophone? Et quel profit en avez-vous tire pour votre profession?
9. Pensez-vous soit indispensable pour un professeur d'Anglais d'avoir sejourne dans un pays Anglophone?

10. Etes-vous au courant des objectifs de l'ensignement de l'Anglais au Congo?

11. Que proposeriez-vous pour rendre efficace l'enseignement de l'Anglais dans notre pays?

12. Que faut-il faire pour motiver les eleves a apprendre l'Anglais?

13. Auriez-vous quelque chose a dire sur les emplois de temps?

14. Auriez-vous de remarques particulieres a faire?

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SERVICE DE LA REFORME PEDAGOGIQUES

DIVISION DES LANGUES VIVANTES

SECTION ANGLAIS

INTERVIEW AVEC LES INSPECTEURS D'ANGLAIS

1. Que pensez-vous de l'enseignement de l'Anglais presentement dans notre pays?

2. Etes-vous satisfaits de la performance des professeurs d'Anglais sur le terrain?

3. Si non, a quoi attribuez-vous cette mauvaise performance?

4. Et quelles mesures envisagez-vous pour remedier a cet etat de choses?

5. Quels sont les problemes majeurs rencontres par les professeurs sur le terrain? Et a quoi les attribuez-vous?

6. Quelles mesures ont ete prises jusque-la pour rendre efficace l'enseignement de l'Anglais au Congo?

7. Quelle est la frequence des visites d'inspection dans les etablissements?

8. Inspectez-vous plus souvent les professeurs ayant recu une formation professionnalle ou alors tous les professeurs?

9. Quels sont vos rapports avec la Section Anglais de l'INRAP?

10. De quels moyens materiels disposez-vous pour une inspection effective dans tout le pays?

11. Auriez-vous autre chose a dire?

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